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SERVING PALMER, MONSON, BRIMFIELD, HOLLAND & WALES

The Journal Register

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www.journalregister.turley.com**COVID CRISIS RESPONSE**

Lions need donations to help residents in need

By Michael Harrison
mharrison@turley.com

MONSON — Timing is everything.

In the same week Gov. Charlie Baker tightened restrictions on businesses in response to a new wave of COVID-19 cases, the Monson Lions Club is hoping to bolster the Community Aid program it launched a couple of months ago to help area residents impacted financially by the pandemic.

Last month, the Monson Lions helped more than 30 local families in danger of going hungry. They used money raised at an October benefit concert to assemble packages of non-perishable food that were distributed at the Brimfield Senior Center. The nearly \$3,000 raised is just about depleted and the club is in a hurry to replenish the fund so it can help even more people in need.

"Our Community Aid program was started to aid the residents of Monson, Brimfield, Holland or Wales who need assistance due to the pandemic," Ann Marie Decoteau, spokesperson for the Monson Lions said.

"Because our funds have been

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Turley Publications file photo

Peter J. Newland and Radio X performed at Brimfield Winery in October for a Monson Lions fundraiser. Proceeds supported a new fund the Lions created to help local residents impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Shop virtually and support the Monson Library

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

MONSON — The Friends of the Monson Free Library's recent community effort — a virtual holiday bazaar — gives the public an opportunity to raise money for the library while shopping for unique gifts. It's also a cyber showcase for local artists.

According to Friends Vice-President Gay R. Paluch, it's an alternative venue for local artists who lost the opportunity to participate in the annual Monson Arts Council Fair because of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

"Each of these people was

willing to help the Friends by giving 10 percent of their [proceeds] to the library," said Paluch, who added that there should be wide audience appeal because of the diversity of the artisans' creations.

"There's enough variety in what they're selling to attract different people," Paluch said.

The four local artists participating in the virtual holiday bazaar include Maureen Solomon (KMS Creations), Peter Mayberry, Tod Beall (Beall Glass Studio) and Penny Lewis. Beall Glass Studio offers stained glass panels and sun catchers, customer designs and re-

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Desmond Newland, 10, and Owen Newland, 6, are shown in October after enjoying their first visit inside the Monson Library since March. Owen is holding up his own library card which he got for the first time that day.



Staff at Hitchcock Academy got into the spirit of the season by decorating the lobby in Christmas decor.

**COMMUNITY**

Holiday events, toy drive at Hitchcock Academy

BRIMFIELD — This weekend kicks off Hitchcock Academy's long list of Christmas festivities featuring lights, decorated trees, Christmas carols, crafts, photo opportunities, cookies, and cocoa.

The fun begins with an appearance by Santa, who will read "Twas The Night Before Christmas" and musical performances, both outdoors from Hitchcock's second floor balcony 3-7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, and 1-5 p.m. Sunday, Dec.

According to Hitchcock Academy Executive Director Cindy Skowyra, the goal of all the activities is to spread cheer while following COVID guidelines.

"The idea," she said, "was to come up with ways to share the season; to make memories, and still keep within protocols."

To that end Skowyra and her staff of elves plan to take full advantage of trees and greens donated by Weston Tree Farm and Lacombe Family Tree Farm to "spruce up" Hitchcock inside and out

with an invitation for community members to come and use Hitchcock Academy as a backdrop for their holiday photos.

Throughout the season, Hitchcock Academy's front porch will feature a Community Tree.

"This tree is special," Skowyra said.

"Other than lights, this tree will be decorated with personalized ornaments which will celebrate the present while honoring special people who have passed."

For \$5, patrons can purchase one type of ornament in memory of a loved one. Or they can become a Hitchcock Star by purchasing a star ornament.

"The hope," Skowyra said, "is to have a Community Tree every year; adding new ornaments to the old and turning it into a Memory Tree as well as a Community Tree."

This year, Hitchcock Academy is proud to be a Toys for Tots drop off location. Anyone

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FUNDRAISER

Community rallies around local couple



Courtesy Photo

A GoFundMe campaign is underway for Guy (left) and Cheryl Lucia (far right), who lost their house in a recent fire.

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

WALES — After a chimney fire took the house of residents Guy and Cheryl Lucia, a GoFundMe campaign on their behalf seeks to help them get by until the couple can rebuild their home.

Rachel Gallant, a family friend and Guy's coworker, set up the campaign on the popular fundraising platform. To Gallant, Guy is known to be hardworking and selfless and as stated on the GoFundMe page, he serves as a voice for Royce Lane residents.

Neither the Lucias nor their pets were harmed in the fire, but their house was destroyed.

"I was thinking when this happened, is what do you do for clothes for the next couple of months, until insurance decides what all of your stuff is worth?" Gallant said.

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"Their vehicle was able to get out of the garage, before the rest of the house burned down, but I just wanted to start it for food, clothes and other stuff that they were going to need right away."

The campaign looks to raise \$25,000 and will continue to accept donations after the goal is reached.

At press time, \$5,405 had been raised, including anonymous donations ranging from \$50 to \$500. Any amount is accepted.

Wales Baptist Church also is helping the cause, asking members to contribute gift cards for the family. In a recent Facebook post, the church wrote, "We all know they'd never ask for help so let's help them when they need it most.

Guy (or Gary as those of us close to him know him by) is a volunteer in our little town, giving time he

HOLIDAY

Showing her Christmas spirit



Three Rivers resident Susan Lowell shows off her Christmas-themed front porch on Belanger Street.

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

"I enjoy decorating my porch," said Lowell. "I do it every year."

IN THE SPIRIT?

Anyone interested in showcasing their Christmas-decorated homes can send high-resolution jpgs and information to mharrison@turley.com.



**Join The Annual Ware
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With a fresh order in-hand, Lori Lind, owner of Girly's Grill, is always ready to serve her signature dishes with a smile on her face.



Lori Lind, owner of Girly's Grill, at the drive-through window that helps keep orders moving while the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions how many customers she can seat inside.

BUSINESS IN THE AGE OF COVID

Girly's Grill: Homemade favorites and smiles for all

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

PALMER — Upon entering Girly's Grill, the tasty aroma of bacon, eggs, burgers and other diner-friendly food is the first thing to greet you at the door.

Next is owner Lori Lind, always ready to serve every customer with a friendly attitude and a smile.

First established in Warren in 2003 and relocating to Palmer in 2008, Lori said the inspiration behind Girly's Grill came from her mother, Barbara Lind,

who ran her own diner, "The Tin Man," in Bourne.

After a fire burned down the original diner in 2001 and learning of a location in Warren that was available, "from the rubbles

of The Tin Man, comes Girly's Grill," Lind said.

"The thing that's so funny is, everything my mom did, I said I'm going to have my own diner," said Lind. "Sure, enough I still do everything the same way my mom did."

Girly's offers a variety of classic diner dishes, including omelets, pancakes, sandwiches, side meats, salads and more — roast pork, stews, chili, meatballs could be on the menu any given day.

"I use good, simple ingredients that just taste great," said Lind.

"Like a biscuit: You don't think anything special about them, until you taste it right outside of the oven, with just a little bit of honey or jelly, it's like

'wow!'"

Lind's mother has influenced her style of cooking, she said.

"She didn't stay in business for 20 years because she didn't have good food," said Lind. "I think the secret ingredient, is really love."

This initiative also includes taking the extra step to make sure her customers enjoy their meals just the way they want them, such as adding salt and pepper to eggs in a breakfast sandwich if that's their preference. That approach has resulted in her establishing a set of regulars, some of whom have eaten at her diner for over a decade.

What Lind says she enjoys about owning and working at her diner is the "magic" she feels when she's cooking for and serving

her customers.

"Just knowing that people gather to just mingle with other people is amazing," Lind said.

"The magic between the food and the customers just being appreciative is something I can't get over. I haven't survived over the past eight months (during the pandemic) because people don't care."

Regular customers, such as Robert Matthews shared similar sentiments on Lind and the diner.

"For an owner, she's great," said Matthews.

"She's pleasant to talk to and she's always laughing, smiling and makes you feel like you really don't want to go back outside."

He also said the food is reasonably priced.

And the portions are more

than ample. Girly's Grill — the name comes from the nickname Lind's grandmother gave her — has a slogan: "Get your fill."

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Lind keeps her door locked and has the phone number of the establishment written on the outside so customers can reserve a seat or order in advance and she can avoid overcapacity. A drive-through pickup option is also available.

The diner, located at 1315 Park Street (just off Rt. 20) is open from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. everyday except Wednesday. Check out specials on Girly's Grill's Facebook page.

To place an order, call 413-284-0005.



Bear gets a hug from owner Justin "Speedy" Dinsmore-Olsen. Each week we will showcase readers' pets here in print and on our Facebook page. Is your fur friend a dog, cat, chicken, lizard, horse, bird, mouse...you get the point. Maybe you're looking to re-home a pet or find a foster home. All pets are welcome! Email a high-resolution jpg of your pet with a little information to mharrison@turley.com.

DOC implements modified operations at facilities statewide

MILFORD — As part of a concerted effort to protect the health and safety of inmates, patients, and staff, the Massachusetts Department of Correction is taking affirmative steps in a continuing effort to reduce the introduction, exposure, and transmission of COVID-19 at its facilities.

As of Nov. 16, the Department's 16 facilities went into modified operations for a period of 14 days to allow the department to continue to provide a second round of universal COVID-19 testing for all inmates while also providing universal testing for staff. Inmates will still have access to medication distribution, sick calls, medical appointments, mental health contacts, showers, disinfecting of rooms, telephone use, and tier time.

General visitation will be temporarily suspended during this time; attorney visits and releases from custody will continue as scheduled. To promote and maintain connected relationships with families and loved ones while the pandemic necessarily limits visitation, the Department launched video visitation this summer and is in the process of expanding its video infrastructure to provide for virtual visitations at all facilities. The Department is also expanding inmate access to phone and email communication during this time.

The Department of Correction's COVID-19 Information Guide provides additional information that will help address many commonly-asked questions regarding the DOC's response to COVID-19 and the steps we have taken to help protect the health of those in our care. The latest information about COVID-19 in Massachusetts is available from the Department of Public Health.

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Grant deadline extended to Dec. 14

The Monson Cultural Council has extended the deadline to apply for community-oriented projects in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences. Local organizations, schools, and individuals have until Dec. 14 to apply.

These grants can support a variety of projects including lectures, workshops, performances in schools, exhibits, and festivals and must take place between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2021. Monson priorities can be found online at mass-culture.org/Monson along with the link to the online application.

Wilbraham-Hampden Rotary Club begins Winter Clothing Drive

WILBRAHAM — The Wilbraham-Hampden Rotary Club has begun collecting clean, gently-worn or new winter clothing including gloves and hats for adults and children beginning this month. Clean white socks are also needed to be given to the homeless. Donated items will be turned over to the Community Survival Center serving the towns of Wilbraham, Hampden and Ludlow and the Springfield and neighborhoods of Indian Orchard, Sixteen Acres and Pine Point.

Area residents are invited to make a difference in our local community by donating to the winter clothing drive. The club has collection bins in the Scantic Valley YMCA in Post Office Park and in Rice's Fruit Farm store on south Main Street. For more information call 413-537-4171.

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Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$100, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

Virtual Holiday Bazaar

Support local artists and the Friends of the Monson Free Library!

Mention the Friends when you purchase from these local businesses during the months of November and December 2020 and they will donate 10% to the Friends of Monson Free Library.

Maureen Solomon

Paintings and jewelry



Maureen Solomon KMS Creations
P.O. Box 187 Monson, MA 01057
413-537-8206
maureen@poddread.com

Peter Mayberry

Hanging ornaments, garden
sculpture, wall hangings, jewelry



Peter Mayberry, Metal Artist
286 Wibriaham Road, Monson MA 01057
413-244-3571
413-596-4491

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Tod Beall/Beall Glass Studio
12 Upper Hampden Rd, Monson, MA
413-267-3380
beallglass@gmail.com

Please contact sellers directly or email friends.monsonfree.library@gmail.com with any questions.

Courtesy Photos

Friends of the Monson Free Library is offering a virtual holiday bazaar featuring an array of artisan creations perfect for gift-giving. Participating artists are Maureen Solomon (KMS Creations), Peter Mayberry, Tod Beall (Beall Glass Studio) and Penny Lewis. The bazaar will run through December.

HITCHCOCK

from page 1
can drop off an unwrapped toy in the box in Hitchcock's lobby until Dec. 15. Hitchcock will also have supplies on hand to craft your own ornament and to make a card to send to our troops.

"We want to show our gratitude to those who serve," Skowyra said.

Crafting and cardmaking began Dec. 9 and will continue Tuesdays through Thursdays from noon to 8 p.m. and Fridays from noon to 6 p.m. until Dec. 23.

On Dec. 16 at 6:30 p.m. artist Anna Ozolins will host a Make Your Own Centerpiece class. Cost of the class is \$15. Interested participants should bring their own container but HFA will provide an assortment of seasonal greens. Skowyra also mentioned that people are free to bring any decorative accent(s) they wish to include in their centerpiece.

"There is no question that COVID has effected how we celebrate the holidays this year," Skowyra said, "but COVID does not mean that we stop celebrating."

She reminds people to wear a mask and notes that activities will be set up to accommodate social distancing.

Hitchcock Academy is located at 2 Brookfield Road in Brimfield. For more information, including a complete list of activities, call 413-245-9977 or go to hitchcockacademy.org.

DEADLINE

The Journal Register has changed its firm deadline for public submissions to Mondays. To get your submission in for that week's edition, email **Editor** at mharrison@turley.com or call the office at 413-283-8393 by noon on Mondays.

We appreciate the cooperation of our readers.



PHONE
413.283.8393
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Editor
Michael Harrison
mharrison@turley.com

Staff Writer
Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

Subscriptions
cgriswold@turley.com

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Corrections

The Journal Register will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 2 or 3. To request a correction, send information to Editor@turley.com, or call 283-8393, extension 236. Corrections may also be requested in writing at: Journal Register, Attn: Editor 24 Water St., Palmer, MA, 01069.



Courtesy photo

MONSON — More than 125 toys were collected Monday at a toy drive organized by local residents and hosted by Main Street Tavern. Dana, Kim, and the staff helped ensure that even in this difficult time of the COVID-19 pandemic, Christmas presents will be distributed throughout the community of Monson to children who otherwise would go without.

Toy Drive A Success

BOSTON — On Tuesday, Gov. Charlie Baker's administration announced that effective Dec. 13, all communities in Massachusetts will return to Step 1 of Phase 3, of the Commonwealth's re-opening plan.

According to a news release from Baker's office, this will reduce indoor capacities across a broad range of sectors of the economy and tighten several other workplace restrictions. In a press conference Tuesday, Baker announced the roll-back to respond to an increase in new COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations since the Thanksgiving holiday he said is straining the health care system in Massachusetts.

The return to Step 1 will also require the closure of certain businesses designated as Step 2 industries. These include indoor performance venues and certain high-contact indoor recreational businesses. In addition, capacity limits will be reduced to 40% statewide for most industries, and the limit on outdoor gatherings will be reduced statewide from 100 persons to 50 persons. Additional safety measures will be applied to restaurant dining as well.

These new measures, Baker said, are designed to prevent infection and viral spread, especially in indoor settings. They will create stronger mask compliance, more social distancing, and limits to the time spent with people outside of your immediate household.

The administration also announced additional guidance for certain sectors including restaurants, office spaces and gyms, to address activities where mask

wearing is not possible at all times.

Phase III, Step I

Effective Dec. 13, all communities will roll back to Phase 3, Step 1 of Massachusetts' re-opening plan, including the following restrictions:

Outdoor gatherings at event venues will be limited to no more than 50 people.

Hosts of outdoor gatherings of greater than 25 people will be required to provide advance notice of the gathering their local board of health.

Indoor theaters and performance venues and higher contact indoor recreation businesses will be required to close to the public.

Outdoor theaters and performance venues will be limited to 25% capacity, and no more than 50 people.

In all communities, capacity will be reduced from 50% to 40% for the following sectors:

Arcades/Indoor and Outdoor Recreational Businesses

- Driving and Flight Schools
- Gyms/Health Clubs
- Libraries
- Museums
- Retail
- Offices
- Places of Worship
- Lodging (common areas)
- Golf facilities
- Movie Theaters (Maximum 50 people per theater)

This new capacity limit will not apply to sectors that do not currently have a

COVID-19 vaccines at Big Y pharmacies when available

SPRINGFIELD — In partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, all 33 Big Y Pharmacy and Wellness Centers are preparing to administer the COVID-19 vaccines once approved and available for distribution. This partnership is being established in anticipation that one or more COVID-19 vaccines will be authorized and approved for use in the United States as part of the Federal Pharmacy Partnership Strategy for COVID-19. This initiative by the HHS with pharmacies across the United States is part of the federal pharmacy program aimed to further increase access to the vaccines. The partnership has deemed pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns in retail and grocery stores as being crucial public health partners for increasing access and convenience of COVID-19 vaccines.

Big Y's pharmacy team currently provides seasonal flu and other rou-

tine vaccines. They plan to participate in any additional training to ensure the safe administration of the vaccine along with educating their customers about the process.

According to Charles L. D'Amour, president and CEO, "We are proud to partner with the United States government in order to provide free COVID-19 vaccines to our customers. When a vaccine is available, our pharmacy teams will be ready to administer them as per CDC guidelines."

Big Y Foods, Inc. is one of the largest independently owned supermarket chains in New England. Big Y operates 85 locations throughout Massachusetts and Connecticut including 71 supermarkets, Fresh Acres Market, Table & Vine Fine Wines and Liquors and 12 Big Y Express gas and convenience locations with almost 12,000 employees.

Vaccine order placed

On Monday, the administration submitted the Commonwealth's initial vaccine order to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The federal government allocated Massachusetts 59,475 doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for this first shipment that is part of 300,000 doses that the CDC is expected to send to Massachusetts by the end of December. The first allotment of 300,000 COVID vaccines will be for the first dose of a two dose regimen.

Anticipating that the federal government will soon issue emergency use authorizations for additional vaccines, the Administration has been working with the COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Group to prepare for a safe, equitable and efficient distribution that is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Baker said the Commonwealth has actively been working on preparedness and planning for a COVID-19 vaccine since early August. Over the past decade, the Commonwealth has invested in the state-of-the-art Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS), which serves as the state's vaccine registry, ordering system, and inventory system. DPH has enhanced MIIS to prepare to administer the COVID-19 vaccine.

Next week, the administration will roll out further information on vaccination prioritization.

For more information, go to mass.gov.

percentage-based capacity limit, including restaurants, laboratories and close contact personal services.

Restaurants and Venues

The administration also announced new guidelines for restaurants and other venues with seated dining, including:

- Patrons must wear masks at all times except when eating and drinking
- Restaurants must seat no more than six patrons per table
- Restaurants must impose a 90-minute time limit on tables
- Musical performances at restaurants will no longer be permitted
- Food court seating must be closed in malls
- Customers are encouraged to dine only with members of the same household.

Offices and Gyms

New guidelines for workplaces and gyms, include:

- In offices, employees must wear masks at their place of work when not in their own workspace and alone
- Employers are encouraged to close or limit the use of break rooms
- Patrons must wear masks at all times in gyms

The administration continues to encourage all employers to offer teleworking to their employees when possible.

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Viewpoints

Editorial

Lions Club needs your help so it can help others

When the Monson Lions Club launched its Community Aid program a few months ago, members were keenly aware that there were people in their community struggling because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Whether it's the seemingly relentless impact of the pandemic on the economy or the illness caused by the virus, no one had to look far to find someone who is hurting.

That the Lions proceeded to hold an outdoor, socially distanced fundraiser despite the logistical obstacles was heady enough. Announcing that the club's goal was to provide aid not only to its immediate community, but to residents in Brimfield, Holland, and Wales as well is off the charts.

Enough can not be said about the club's ambition and heartfelt concern for its neighbors. Unfortunately, good intentions alone will not fulfill the Lions' goals.

With limited resources, the Lions decided to focus on one particular need for now and the most universal need in hard times is always having enough to eat. That initial fundraiser netted enough to supply 33 families with supplemental food packages – a terrific start. Now the question is, how can the club keep the program going and help even more individuals and families?

New restrictions on everyday life, particularly gatherings, aimed at stopping the spread of the virus makes any new fundraising events even more difficult to plan and pull off. We're sure they will come up with some creative ideas, but in the meantime, they have to depend on you and your generosity. If the Lions are going to succeed in helping as many area residents as possible avoid going hungry, unsolicited donations will have to keep the aid program afloat for the time being.

Consider that, with the new surge in COVID cases since Thanksgiving, the post-Christmas scenario could look just as bad – if not worse.

Every new wave of infections extends the restrictions and economic turmoil everyone wants to see end and even with wholesale vaccine distribution on the horizon, "normal" is still a long way off. If a government-funded safety net was merely inadequate before COVID, by now it's nearly nonexistent.

Community service minded not-for-profits like the Lions Club have always stepped up when needed. Correspondingly, those efforts have always depended on a strong response from the community.

One positive way to look at it is, if enough people donate, no one has to chip in very much. With that in mind, if you're able, please consider sending what you can afford the Lions' way. No donation is too small.

Anyone who would like to make a donation can email the Monson Lions Club at monsonlionsclub@gmail.com or call 413-668-6653. To send a donation, checks can be mailed to: The Monson Lions, P.O. Box 142, Monson, MA 01057. Please note "for community aid" in the memo portion of the check.

And for those who have the means to support other local organizations in need, please consider these: Palmer Domestic Violence Task Force; Palmer Historical & Cultural Center; Hitchcock Academy in Brimfield; Keep Homestead in Monson; Here Today Adopted Tomorrow Animal Sanctuary in Brimfield; and Monson Against Violence Everywhere.

All of these organizations do important work and are worthy of your support. And if you can only give a little, don't let that stop you. For not-for-profits, a little always goes a long way.

We're in this together and together we'll get through it.

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SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

No simple answer to claim benefits questions

By Russell Gloor
Guest columnist

Dear Rusty: I'm almost 59 and hope to retire from working soon. Should I take Social Security as soon as possible, or wait for the maximum amount? Signed: Planning Ahead

Dear Planning Ahead: I'm afraid there's no simple answer to your question, except "it depends." It depends on your health; it depends on your need for the money when you retire; and it depends on your life expectancy. Plus, your marital status may also influence your decision on when to claim.

First of all, you cannot claim your Social Security retirement benefit until you are at least 62 years old. But if you claim at 62, your benefit will be cut by 30% from what it would be if you waited until your full retirement age of 67. You actually have an eight-year window starting at age 62, and lasting until age 70 to claim your Social Security benefit. The earlier in that window you claim, the smaller your benefit will be. And the longer you wait to claim, up to age 70, the higher your benefit will be.

At age 70, your benefit will reach maximum at 24% more than it would be at age 67, and 76% more than it will be at age 62. Essentially, if you are in good health, don't urgently need the money earlier, and expect to enjoy at least "average" longevity (about 85 for a man your age today), you will not only get a much higher monthly benefit, but also collect much more in cumulative lifetime benefits by waiting until age 70, or as long as you can, to claim. Of course, no one knows how long they will live, but there are online tools which can assist you with estimating your life expectancy. One relatively simple and user friendly tool is available from Social Security at this link: <https://www.ssa.gov/oact/population/longevity.html>.

Conversely, if you are not in good health and don't expect at least average longevity, or if you urgently need the money when you retire from working, claiming earlier may also be a prudent choice. If you are married and your predecease your wife, her survivor benefit will be based upon the benefit amount you are actually receiving, so by waiting to get a higher benefit for yourself you are also enhancing your wife's eventual benefit as your widow, should you pass before her.

Be aware too that, should you decide to go back to work, until you reach age 67 you'll be subject to Social Security's "earnings test," which limits how much you can earn before Social Security takes back some of your benefits (the 2021 limit is \$18,960 and if that were exceeded, they'd take back benefits equal to half of the amount it was exceeded by). The earnings limit changes annually but goes away at your full retirement age.

So, these are the things you should consider in deciding when in that eight-year window to claim your benefits. I cannot directly answer your question for you, but I hope the above gives you what's needed to make an informed decision on when to claim your Social Security benefits.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.

Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

Election letters to the editor welcome

The Journal Register welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Journal Register, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to mharrison@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Thursday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.

For more information, call editor Michael Harrison at 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in The Journal Register.

Letters to the editor policy

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length, and guest columns between 500-800 words. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require that the person submitting the opinion also include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must confirm authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, or defamation of character.

Please send opinions to:
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24 Water St.,
Palmer MA 01069,
or by e-mail to:
mharrison@turley.com

The submission deadline for consideration is Monday at noon.

The Journal Register

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PATRICK H. TURLEY
CEO

KEITH TURLEY
President

EDITOR
Michael Harrison
mharrison@turley.com

STAFF WRITER
Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

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Coriander, fit for cookie-making

My family and I have been enjoying Christmas by Candlelight at Old Sturbridge Village for as long as the program has been running. Wanting to visit the Village after a long work day is through is a real testament to how wonderful this evening event is. It was there that we first sampled a coriander cookie made by a recipe from the early 19th century. We thought it was so yummy, in fact, that it became a welcome addition to our Christmas cookie repertoire. With a double batch under my belt just this afternoon, there is no time like the present to learn about this really neat, multi-purpose plant.

Most gardeners already know that coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*) is one of the few herbs that goes by two different names depending on the part of the plant used. Its foliage, known as cilantro, is used fresh in a number of culinary delights. When the plant goes to seed, known as coriander, it can be used in that stage as well, eaten whole, crushed or powdered.

I liken cilantro to be the "marigold" of the herb world. Either you love it or you hate it. I, for one, immensely dislike it and if given the chance to pick it out of my salsa I will certainly do so. Even in a restaurant. I found it interesting to learn that some people possess a genetically predisposed aversion to it, according to studies by Charles J. Wysocki, of the Monell Chemical Senses Center, in Philadelphia. To me it has a bitter taste that I have a hard time describing beyond that. Dirty? Soil-like? Most people that do dislike it have a similar lack of descriptive ability; they just can't put their finger on it, but they don't like the taste...or the smell of it.

It's funny that when my oldest daughter received her Ancestry DNA results, she was shown not to possess the genetic aversion. Well, she didn't get that from me....

Cilantro is often used in salsa and other Mexican, Asian and Italian dishes including curries, sauces, salads and soups. If you prefer to grow the plant more for its greens and less for its seeds, manage it as you would spinach. Sow seeds in the ground in the cool of the sea-

son and in succession every two weeks. It dislikes being transplanted but doesn't mind pot culture. Harvest greens rather aggressively- about one-third of the plant at a time. Just like spinach, there are slow-to-bolt varieties to choose from such as aptly named 'Slow Bolt' and 'Longstanding.' Cilantro's flowers are edible and they attract lots of beneficial insects such as lady beetles, parasitic wasps and syrphid flies.

Coriander seeds, on the other hand, have a pleasant (at least to me) fragrance once dried. The scent is easier to pinpoint too; nutty and spicy (ever so slightly) come to mind. Coriander seed is also well known in various ethnic cuisines and is a favorite in spice blends, curry being the most popular. It is also used in the making of a number of distilled spirits, herbal liqueurs and Christmas cookies as I have come to find out and favor!

The Herb Society noted that during World War II coriander seeds were coated in white or pink sugar and thrown from carnival wagons, earning the name "confectons" or "confetti" When the seeds were replaced by balls of colored paper the name confetti stuck. Take this one to your next game of Cruise Ship Trivia!

It is easy to harvest the seeds. Simply let the heads dry to brown right on the plant. Clip them and place inside a paper bag; as they dry further they will open and the seeds will pop out. Even if you are only interested in harvesting the seeds, multiple plantings (or a big garden patch) are necessary to get a decent-sized harvest. Let a few drop their seeds and you will be blessed with a few self sown plants next spring.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

when the virus first emerged on the West Coast.

In particular, we failed to provide a comprehensive, federally led nationwide strategy providing clear guidance on mask-wearing, offering resources for contact tracing, and helping states develop their approaches to quarantining for those exposed to the virus—the three legs vital for early containment.

Instead, President Trump repudiated and disregarded the advice of experts and health officials and offered a misleading narrative about the spread of the virus abating in the spring. His misinformation was picked up and amplified by news outlets and by politicians who alleged that concern about the pandemic was just a hoax peddled by President Trump's opponents and would disappear as soon as the election was over. Or, even worse, who misled Americans about hydroxychloroquine and other drugs. In other words, many Americans were fed bad information at a time when high-quality information was necessary to stem the spread of the virus and limit the number of deaths.

The result has been devastating, and not just to our public health efforts. For many decades,

the U.S. Has been the leader of the international order, the undisputed power, with vast wealth, economic and military power, and global reach. But our image has been tarnished badly because of the mishandling of this outbreak, made worse over the last four years by our willingness to step away from alliances and international organizations. We are weaker on the world stage than we were a few years ago, and especially since the start of the pandemic.

The problem with reaching this point was summed up cogently back in October by John Halpin, of the Center for American Progress, as part of a study looking at the alarming rise in Americans' willingness to believe conspiracy theories, unfounded rumors, and already-disproven claims. "American society faces a genuine crisis in public trust in government, corporations and the media, exacerbated by wide partisan divides about who and what to believe," he said. "If we cannot agree on basic facts about what is going on in our country, there is little hope of generating consensus on what needs to be done to control the pandemic and fix our economy. Rebuilding public trust in major institutions, and the in-

formation they provide the public, is now a national priority."

I agree. In many ways, the world of information has improved from the days when just a handful of news sources provided Americans with what we needed to know, but there was also a benefit to those times: we might have disagreed about how to tackle national problems, but we all understood what those problems were. Today, people stick to the news sources they agree with, creating a muddle of American public opinion and making it extremely difficult for policy makers to find the common ground needed to accomplish difficult and ambitious policy goals.

This is a significant challenge for the United States, and we have got to get on top of it sooner rather than later.

Lee Hamilton is a senior advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

LIONS

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limited thus far, we have concentrated on the issue of hunger. In addition to this, our hope is to be able to assist those who may have other needs. As grateful as we are for the generosity of those who attended and contributed to our concert, the need is so much greater than our resources."

The order issued by Gov. Baker Tuesday means many businesses will have to restrict hours and patronage while others will have to close entirely while the pandemic rages. That means that business owners and their employees alike continue to take a hit to their incomes. With Christmas just a couple weeks away and no COVID-19 emergency relief from the federal government in sight, many residents face a long, hard winter.

While food packages served an obvious need, the Monson Lions are planning for other ways they can help local residents when enough people who are able contribute to the fund.

"We are currently determining how we can best serve the needs of the people in these communities," Decoteau said.

COVID-related restrictions also makes it harder for organizations like the Lions to hold safe events like the outdoor concert in October.

"Our fundraising capabilities have been greatly impacted by the restrictions we are all experiencing during these challenging times," Decoteau said.

Anyone who would like to make a donation or ask for assistance can contact the Monson Lions Club by email at monsonlionsclub@gmail.com or call 413-668-6653. To make a donation, checks can be sent to: The Monson Lions, P.O. Box 142, Monson, MA 01057. Please note "for community aid" in the memo portion of the check.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

The Monson Lions Club was chartered in 1955. Since then, members have been working to improve the quality of life for citizens of the local communities and around the world. Lions club members are all volunteers and all the money that is raised by the events that they host goes to their causes. New members are always welcome to join. To learn more about the Monson Lions, go to monsonlionsclub.org.

Young women in public affairs applications being accepted

REGION — The Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley is now accepting applications for the 2021 Young Women in Public Affairs Award, recognizing young women for their demonstrated leadership skills and commitment to public service.

Completed applications are due by March 12, 2021.

Monson resident and Scholarship Chair, Maria Maloney said, "We are looking for women in the Quaboag Valley and surrounding towns who are high school juniors or seniors, and have an active commitment to volunteerism, experience in local or student government, demonstrated leadership

skills, and dedication to advancing the status of women throughout the world. The club offers an award of \$1,000 cash to the most outstanding applicant."

Winners of the local award are eligible to be considered for a District-wide and International award. More information is available at the international site: http://www.zonta.org/web/Programs/Education_Home

Locally, the YWPA application is available by contacting your School Counseling Office, emailing Maria Maloney at MariaMaloney@sws@gmail.com or by download from www.zontaqv.org/resources.

LUCIA from page 1

barely has to be a voice for the Royce Lane residents. Guy and Cheryl are long time residents of Wales. Let's come together and show the world what small towns are made of for this family and provide support when it's needed most."

Call the church at 413-245-3109,

go to walesbaptistchurch.org or visit the church's Facebook page.

Donations can be dropped off at PTS Supply, where Gallant and Guy both work, at 1158 Street, Palmer. To donate to the online campaign, visit gofundme.com and search "Lend a hand to the Lucias."

MONSON LIBRARY from page 1

pairs. Featured items that are up for sale include an Art Deco Train Panel, Craftsman College Panel, and The Heart of a Snowflake. The latter is based on an electron microscope project by scientist Kenneth G. Libbrecht, who is known for photographing multiple snowflakes and even gave Beall permission to offer one of his images for sale.

Beall also said the main reason he wanted to participate in this virtual bazaar was to support the Monson library's fundraising efforts.

"I think that the library is the most import resource we have in our community," said Beall. "Anything I can do help out the library, I am glad to do."

Anyone interested in purchasing paintings and jewelry can check out KMS Creations when shopping on the bazaar. As for Solomon, the artist will be offering a dozen necklaces, plus two Kitchen Goddess wall hangings.

Lewis will be using her skills as a fabric artist to offer original quilted designs and applique, such as table toppers, table runners quits and more.

Also, metal artist Mayberry is offering sculptures made of copper,

brass, steel and stainless glass steel.

The main thing Paluch said she is looking forward to for the bazaar is the sales. That and bringing art into peoples' lives either for gifts or for their own home decor.

"We're looking forward to having the opportunity to add some creative art into their home and provide a place for people to shop so they don't have to go out," said Paluch.

"It's a community outreach effort from the friends. We've really

have never done this before, so we really don't know if it's going to be a financial success, but we've featured these artists all over our website and I think they're happy to be in it."

The virtual holiday bazaar will be available until the end of December. For more information on the local artists and their work, visit monsonlibrary.com/friends-of-the-library or send an email to friends.monsonlibrary@gmail.com.

Paluch said Friends of the Monson Free Library attracted a lot of new members this year and as of Dec. 1, have collected approximately \$2,000 for the facility. New members are always come. Go to the website or email the group for details.



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Smola supports passage of \$46.2 billion state budget for fiscal 2021

BOSTON — State Rep. Todd M. Smola (R-Warren, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means) recently supported a \$46.2 billion state budget for fiscal 2021 that increases local aid for cities and towns, and commits additional spending to fund a variety of COVID-19 relief initiatives across Massachusetts.

The budget, which represents a compromise negotiated by a six-member House and Senate conference committee, was enacted by the House on a vote of 147-11 on Dec. 4, less than 24 hours after the 396-page document was filed. The budget covers state spending through June 30, 2021, and comes five months after the Legislature passed the first of three interim budgets for the fiscal year that began on July 1.

Smola said he had a number of concerns about how the budget process unfolded, but felt it was important to pass the bill to ensure that municipalities, families and businesses can access needed resources during the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic.

"I still have many concerns about the process and the abbreviated time frame members were given to review the budget," he said. "However, I voted yes because I believe that, during this pandemic, it is more important than ever to work cooperatively to do the people's business. That being said, I would urge the governor and his administration to use the full 10 days allotted them by the Constitution to carefully review this package.

While it contains several important components, it also includes some troubling pieces that should either be sent back with amendments or vetoed outright."

The fiscal 2021 budget provides cities and towns with \$5.28 billion in Chapter 70 education aid, an increase of \$107.6 million, along with \$1.129 billion in Unrestricted General Government Assistance to support essential municipal services. The budget

also contains additional education support by funding the Special Education Circuit Breaker at \$345 million, charter school reimbursements for sending districts at \$117 million, regional school transportation at \$82 million, and homeless student transportation at \$13 million.

Smola noted that under the fiscal 2021 budget, Ware will receive \$10,591,234 in Chapter 70 education aid and \$1,833,298 in unrestricted state aid; and Warren will receive \$960,737 in unrestricted state aid. Brimfield will receive \$1,365,006 in Chapter 70 education aid and \$414,004 in unrestricted state aid; Holland will receive \$933,678 in Chapter 70 education aid and \$214,328 in unrestricted state aid; Palmer will receive \$10,915,640 in Chapter 70 education aid and \$2,129,586 in unrestricted state aid; Sturbridge will receive \$3,846,634 in Chapter 70 education aid and \$822,696 in unrestricted state aid; Wales will receive \$1,000,730 in Chapter 70 education aid and \$250,815 in unrestricted state aid;

To help address some of the housing challenges posed by the pandemic, the budget includes language requiring the courts to grant a continuance to tenants facing eviction for non-payment of rent due to financial hardship from the COVID-19 emergency if the tenant has an active rental assistance application pending with the state. It also commits \$50 million to the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition program, and provides \$125 million for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program.

The fiscal 2021 budget also provides funding to address some of the food insecurity issues that have been exacerbated by the pandemic, including \$30.4 million for emergency food assistance and \$13 million for the Healthy Incentives Program. Smola noted that the hunger rate in Massachusetts has increased by 59% since 2018, with 1 in 5 children now living in a food-insecure household, ac-

cording to an October 2020 report by Feeding America.

The budget also provides \$46 million in grant funding to assist small businesses that have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, including \$17.5 million to help businesses with 50 or fewer employees meet their payroll, rent and utility costs. An additional \$3.85 million will be made available for small business technical assistance and grants that focus on the needs of women-owned and minority businesses.

Other budget highlights include: \$169 million for the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services;

\$50.3 million for domestic violence and sexual assault prevention and survivor services;

\$17.5 million in grants for local Councils on Aging;

Creation of an Early Education and Care Public-Private Trust Fund;

\$15 million in Head Start grants;

\$120 million in higher education scholarships; and

\$307 million for guardianship, foster care, adoption, family preservation and kinship services provided by the Department of Children and Families.

Smola said the fiscal 2021 budget does not include any new, broad-based taxes. Instead, it relies on several one-time revenue sources, including a \$1.7 billion drawdown from the state's Stabilization Fund, and an accelerated sales tax payment schedule for businesses collecting more than \$150,000 in sales, meals or occupancy taxes, which will provide an additional \$267 million in one-time revenues.

The fiscal 2021 budget, which has also been approved by the Senate, now moves to Gov. Charlie Baker's desk for his review. The governor has the power to issue line item vetoes and can also return portions of the budget to the Legislature with proposed amendments.

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In the classroom

Pathfinder Regional High School remains open – and COVID-free



Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School, located at 240 Sykes Street in Palmer.

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

PALMER – Since resuming in-person learning on Sept. 15, Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School has developed custom strategies and safety measures to keep staff and students safe while the COVID-19 pandemic persists.

Pathfinder Principal and Assistant Superintendent Eric Duda said the school has been open five days a week for students in grades nine through 12.

"We have a week of students in their technical program and then a week of academics," said Duda. "I think we're doing things really well here."

Other safety measures Duda mentioned included constant sanitizing, maintaining social distancing protocols with students in each classroom and tech program following cohorts for the students and more.

"We've had an incredible level of compliance with masks with the students and that's been great," said Duda.

"It's been a team effort to make

it work."

As for the cohorts, Duda said when students are in their technical programs, they remain in those areas all day and have their meals delivered to them. He also said there are a limited number of students eating in the cafeteria and gymnasium.

Also, Duda said they've developed "extreme over the top contact tracing capabilities" to monitor and limit the spread of coronavirus and the COVID-19 disease it causes.

"We've labeled every seat and have everybody sit six feet apart," said Duda.

"We know who's sitting where, in what room at what time and in what seat, every single day. In between, when a second or third student sits in that same seat, we know which three are going to be there all week."

He also said they sanitize "in between every one of those sittings."

Because of these initiatives, Duda said they've had zero evidence of any person-to-person transmission of COVID-19.

"We're just really priding ourselves on this and think it's a combination of things," said Duda.

The responses they've received since implementing these initiatives has been positive from community members, parents and more.

"Most are very pleased that we've remained open five days a week," said Duda.

"I hear that from people all the time and that's really awesome. It makes us happy to see the support from the community, parents, and students."

While Pathfinder continues to maintain the appropriate safety calls to remain open, Superintendent Gerald Paist said they're hoping to grow its student body.

"The application is on our website," said Paist. "It can be done electronically and right now, I think we have pretty close to 100 applications for next year. We'd like to get 200."

Duda said the school has a new schedule posted on its website for "Tour Tuesdays."

To access Pathfinder's 2021/2022 school year application, view an information video produced by student Michael Gilbert and more, visit pathfindertech.org.

UMass Amherst Libraries share news of publication

AMHERST — The UMass Amherst Libraries share news of the publication of *Pen Pal: Prison Letters from a Free Spirit on Slow Death Row* by Tiyo Attallah Salah-El. *Pen Pal* was published in October 2020 by the independent press OR Books, and all author royalties will be donated to the Libraries, where Tiyo's papers are housed in scua.library.umass.edu in the Special Collections archive.

Born in 1932, Tiyo Attallah Salah-El died at 85 in 2018 on "Slow Death Row" while serving a life sentence in a Pennsylvania prison. He was a man with a dizzying array of talents and vocations: author, scholar, teacher, musician, composer and activist, as the founder of the Coalition for the Abolition of Prisons. He was also, as seen in the letters he wrote over a decade and half to his friend Paul Alan Smith that make up this book, an extraordinarily eloquent correspondent.

Tiyo's letters vividly capture the tribulations endured by those incarcerated, especially the nearly 60% who are non-white: habitual

racism, arbitrary lockdowns, brutal beatings and hospitalizations, stifling heat and bitter cold. They describe Tiyo's individual struggles with cancer, aging, and the sirens of personal demons. Yet, despite crushing hardships and indignities, Tiyo's positive energy shines through, in dispatches that are generous, philosophical and often laugh-out-loud funny. We learn of his many friendships, including those with the historian Howard Zinn; a range of activists, advocates, and supporters on the outside; and two fellow people in prison who were leaders of the Black liberation group MOVE.

"We began working with Tiyo in 2006 to document his life, activism, and experience in prison," says Acting Head of SCUA Aaron Rubinstein. "The voices of people in prisons are rarely heard, and Tiyo's contribution to the prison abolition movement has never felt more timely. We are thrilled that Tiyo's story can be known by so many people, and the donated royalties will support digitization of Tiyo's collection and related

work with our social change collections."

At a time when the appalling racial bias of America's police and criminal justice system is in the spotlight as never before, *Pen Pal* is both a vital intervention and a moving portrait of someone whose physical confinement could never extinguish an extraordinary free spirit.

Pen Pal contains a preface by Mike Africa, Jr., and the audiobook, released simultaneously, features the actors Carl Weathers and Adam Arkin, among others.

For more information about Tiyo Attallah Salah-El and his papers:

[HYPERLINK "http://findingaids.library.umass.edu/ead/mums590"](http://findingaids.library.umass.edu/ead/mums590) <http://findingaids.library.umass.edu/ead/mums590>

For more information about *Pen Pal*, including how to order a copy: [HYPERLINK "https://www.orbooks.com/catalog/pen-pal/"](https://www.orbooks.com/catalog/pen-pal/) 't _blank" <https://www.orbooks.com/catalog/pen-pal/>

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Want to help spread some holiday cheer to local senior citizens this year? Home Sweet Home Senior Living has a plan and they could use your help.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this holiday season is difficult for everyone to navigate, but especially for older adults who are unable to see their families as they normally would. Katie Krupka, senior living advisor at Home Sweet Home, is collecting small gifts and cards through Dec. 13 to distribute to local seniors who could use a little extra holiday joy this year.

If you are donating a warped gift, there should be an indication if it is intended to be gender-specific.

Krupka can arrange a socially distanced drop-off or pick-up



arrangements for all donated gifts.

For more information, email her at katie@homesweethomesla.com or call 413-446-8722.

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Please Consume Responsibly. This product may cause impairment and may be habit forming. For use only by adults 21 years of age or older. Keep out of the reach of children. This product has not been analyzed or approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). There is limited information on the side effects of using this product, and there may be associated health risks. Marijuana use during pregnancy and breast-feeding may pose potential harms. It is against the law to drive or operate machinery when under the influence of this product. KEEP THIS PRODUCT AWAY FROM CHILDREN. There may be health risks associated with consumption of this product. Marijuana can impair concentration, coordination, and judgment. The impairment effects of edible marijuana may be delayed by two hours or more. In case of accidental ingestion, contact poison control hotline 1-800-222-1222 or 9-1-1. This product may be illegal outside of MA.





SPORTS

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HIGH SCHOOL

Jump balls eliminated, close contacted limited in basketball modifications

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION — Modifications for boys and girls basketball have been released and the game will look a little different, though significant limits to fan attendance will restrict how many can see the different-looking game.

In Western Massachusetts, the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference has decided the first practices will not take place until Jan. 4. Several other areas of the states are following suit. With no playoffs scheduled for the winter season, the various regions have the flexibility to decide when schools

will begin and end play.

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association has set a Dec. 14 date as the soonest teams can start practicing. Several Central Massachusetts schools will start practicing then with contests likely to begin right after the new year.

One rule that will be consistent throughout all sports is the mask mandate.

Participants must wear masks or face coverings at all times while participating in practices or games. The one caveat is that all schools have the ability to designate areas where athletes can take "mask breaks." There will be areas designated for those breaks, especially

during basketball games where players going up and down the court many times wearing a mask may need to catch a breath when the whistle blows. Because of the close contact involved with playing basketball, there was no way to play the sport safely without masks being worn.

The game will see modifications, but nothing too drastic and more along the way the timing, and setup of the game. Gameplay will be largely similar though different ideas were discussed to maintain distancing.

Like many other sports, the pre-game will be simplified. Only one captain will meet with the referees

prior to the game. Starting lineups will likely be announced, but the traditional "high-five" lines will not be allowed, along with handshakes with the opposing coach.

There will be emphasis during game play to enforce rules about freedom of movement and closely guarding opposing players. Defenders are not allowed to impede the progress of offensive players, and will enforce the five-second rule on players who are being closely guarded.

The jump ball will be eliminated in favor of a simple coin toss to give possession of the ball to one

BASKETBALL | page 8

SOCCER



Submitted photos

Laura Gouvin, a Monson resident, plays for Boston College. It was one of the only college programs in New England not forced to cancel its 2020 season.



Gouvin plays in an Atlantic Coast Conference match during the fall.

SOCCER

Academy team joining Pioneers organization

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW — The Western Mass. Pioneers will be adding a USL Academy League soccer team in 2021. The New England Mutiny are also in the process of forming an Academy soccer team.

Both Academy soccer squads, which will be playing their home matches at historic Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow, will be made up of the top U16-U19 prospects from the Western Mass. area.

"In club soccer, you're limited to certain age groups," said Joe Ferrara, who's the owner of the Mutiny and the new Pioneers General Manager. "An academy soccer team allows talented players to play for one team regardless of their age."

The Pioneers had about 50 players try-out for the Academy League team in November.

"The Academy League team is a new program that we've added this year," said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "Our main goal is to develop the best local soccer players from Western Mass. to hopefully play for the Pioneers in the future."

Molinari, along with the Pioneers assistant coaches will be coaching the Academy League team in 2021.

"We wanted to have the same coaching staff for both the USL 2 team (Pioneers) and the USL Academy team," Molinari said. "We want both of the teams to play the same type of style. I do like coaching the younger soccer players."

The plan is for the boys' Academy League team to play their home matches prior to the Pioneers matches. Both teams will also be traveling together to road matches.

The boys' team will be competing against eleven other teams in the Northeast Division of the USL Academy League.

Molinari has been coaching the Pioneers, who are the defend-

ing Northeast Conference Champions of USL League Two, since 2012. The Pioneers weren't able to play any matches in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Pioneers did not suffer any losses during the 2019 regular season. They lost in conference finals and qualified for U.S. Open Cup, which wasn't held last summer. The Pioneers also qualified for the league playoffs in 2016.

"I really enjoy coaching the Pioneers and it was painful not being able to compete in any matches last year," Molinari said. "We won our Division title in 2019 and it was our best season since I've been coaching the team. We're now thinking about the 2021 season."

Ferrara gave his thoughts about adding a girl's Academy team for the Mutiny.

"We're looking for the top girl's prospects in the area to play for the girls academy team next year," he said. "The age group will be similar to the boy's side. The girl's academy team will probably have one or two older players."

The girls Academy team will be playing home matches before the Mutiny.

Jill Serafino is going to be the head coach of the girls academy squad.

Serafino is currently the Mutiny General Manager and is an assistant coach. She's also an assistant coach for the women's soccer team at Springfield College.

The Mutiny, who celebrated their twentieth anniversary in 2019, played all of their home matches at Lusitano Stadium for the first time.

The Mutiny also finished the 2019 regular season without a loss. They lost to the Lancaster Inferno in the United Women's Soccer Eastern Conference finals.

For more information on either Academy soccer teams please contact Joe Ferrara at jferrara@wmpioneers.com or 413-330-9775.

Pioneers tryouts conclude

The Western Mass. Pioneers organization continued its tryouts for various age groups between Nov. 16 and 20, testing out the skills of many young people throughout the region to fill its various teams for the upcoming spring season. The Pioneers are hopeful for a normal schedule in 2021.



two events for the Tri Track Open

way's 2021 schedule includes multiple major events, a full slate of weekly racing series divisions ready to race for a championship and the thrills and spills of staple shows to begin and end the season.

Fans will get a taste of Super-modifieds, Late Models, Modifieds, Midgets, Super Late Models, Trucks, Street Stocks and more over the course of more than 22 events of racing from April through October.

Continuing tradition, the season begins with the Spring Bunny Brawl on April 24, and ends with the two-day Howler weekend, Oct. 23 and 24. Star will give teams, drivers and fans one week off each month during the season, with off nights scheduled for May 22, June 12, July 17, Aug. 28 and Sept. 4.

The J&S Paving 350 Supermodifieds will continue to honor some of the best of the past at Star for two dates -- May 8 and a new Sunday special as part of the Star Classic

weekend, Sept. 19. of their 10-race schedule for 2021. A champion will be crowned on Sept. 11. Major memorial events planned include the inaugural Dennis McKenney Memorial race as part of the Star Classic:

Bob Webber Sr. Memorial (May 15)
Jen Garland Memorial (June 19)
Krupski Cup (June 26)
Marco Turcotte Memorial (July 24)
Jim Belfiore Memorial (Aug. 14)
Dennis McKenney Memorial at

two events for the Tri Track Open

RACING | page 2

AUTO RACING

Star Speedway announces 2021 schedule

EPPING, N.H. — Star Speedway's 2021 schedule includes multiple major events, a full slate of weekly racing series divisions ready to race for a championship and the thrills and spills of staple shows to begin and end the season.

Fans will get a taste of Super-modifieds, Late Models, Modifieds, Midgets, Super Late Models, Trucks, Street Stocks and more over the course of more than 22 events of racing from April through October.

The schedule is headlined by

two events for the Tri Track Open

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During the past four years, she attended Miss Porter's School, which is a private college preparatory school for girls located in Farmington, Connecticut.

Besides performing well in the classroom, Gouvin helped the Miss Porter's soccer team post a 78-6 overall record. Gouvin finished her prep soccer career with a total of 41 assists, which is a school record. She was also selected as an All-American last year.

The B.C. women's soccer team only won one match this season, but they faced three top ten teams and kept improving throughout the season.

"We did play a lot of close matches, which was one of the reasons why I wanted to play soc-

cer at an ACC school," Gouvin said. "We took a step forward in every game that we played this season."

The Eagles began the 2020 campaign with three consecutive road matches.

Gouvin's collegiate soccer career began with a night match at the University of Notre Dame.

"It was my first time visiting the Notre Dame campus and I was a little bit nervous," she said. "It just felt good being out on the field again because I hadn't played a soccer game in so long."

Gouvin was told by second-year Eagles head coach Jason Lowe that she would be one of the eleven starters against the Irish.

"Seeing my name listed on the starting line-up sheets was a special moment," Gouvin said. "I put in a lot of hard work just to get to that point. I also play several positions, so I just wanted to help my team anyway that I can."

Gouvin was recruited by former B.C. head coach Alison Foley.

"I was recruited by coach Foley, but coach Lowe is also a very good soccer coach," Gouvin said. "Coach Lowe is in the process of rebuilding our soccer program. He's supportive of you on and off the field."

Following the match at N.D., which was a 2-0 loss, the Eagles made the five-hour bus trip to the University of Louisville.

"I spent most of the bus ride to Louisville doing schoolwork," Gouvin said. "When I did look out my window, I saw a part of the country that I've never seen before. It was pretty cool."

After being shutout in their first two matches of the season, the Eagles suffered a 4-3 loss at Pittsburgh on October 8.

One of the Eagles highlights of the Pitt match occurred during the 16th minute of the opening half. Gouvin earned her first college assist on a corner kick, which gave her team a 2-1 lead.

"I took a lot of the corners and set pieces this season," she said. "I just struck the ball really well on that play and we scored a goal on a header. It felt very good."

A week later, the Eagles played their first home match against Duke, who were ranked

GOUVIN | page 2

DEATH NOTICES

Theresa M. Brothers, 73

Died: Dec. 5, 2020

Mary Virginia Charles, 96

Died: Dec. 1, 2020

Elizabeth Ann Ewing Fox, 89

Died: Aug. 30, 2020

The Journal Register
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$100, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.*Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.*

OBITUARIES

Theresa M. Brothers, 73

MONSON — Theresa M Brothers, 73, passed away Saturday, Dec. 5, 2020.

Theresa was born Jan. 15, 1947, in Brooklyn, N.Y., to the late John H. and Ruth (Guttenstag) Brunner, Sr. She has been a resident of Monson for many years.

Terry had a nurturing and caring soul. She was a LPN and worked in home healthcare and also assisted with at-home dialysis for many years. Terry could also be found driving a truck if that was what needed to be done. She enjoyed traveling, "tag selling" and Saturday evening was reserved for "poker night" with family and friends.

Theresa was a member and Past Queen of the Ahlem Temple #84 Daughters of the Nile and

also was part of the Unit of Bedouin Biles performance unit and a member of the Barona Chapter Order of Eastern Star.

She was predeceased by her husband Alfred E. Brothers, Jr. in 2008 and leaves her loving family: sons, Mark H. LaFountain and his wife Wendy of Uxbridge, Ronald C. Monn and his wife Kimberly of Suffield, Va., Scott W. LaFountain and his wife Lisa of Plant City, Fla.; brothers, Kenneth L. Brunner and his wife Margie of Punta Gorda, Fla., Richard W. Brunner of Lexington, S.C., John H. Brunner, Jr. of Monson; two grandchildren, David Monn and Jason Monn; a great grand-



daughter, Cheyenne Monn, and many loving family members and close friends.

A gathering of family and friends will be held 1-5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11, at Theresa's home, 15 Bliss St. Monson.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Lombard Funeral Home in Monson. In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial donation in Theresa's name to the Shriner's Hospital for Children 516 Carew Street Springfield, MA 01104.

For online condolences please visit lombardfuneral-home.com.*Mary (Longtine) Charles, 96*

MANCHESTER, NH — Mary Virginia (Longtine) (Murray) Charles, 96, formerly of Boynton Beach, Fla., passed away Dec. 1, 2020, at Birch Hill Manor, Manchester, N.H.

She befriended and was loved by many of the staff and residents at Birch Hill. She grew up in Palmer, Massachusetts before attending Forsyth School of Dental Hygiene in Boston in 1947. She married William (Bill) Murray and they lived in Puerto Rico, where she provided dental hygiene services to children. They later retired to Greentree Villas in Boynton Beach. She travelled the world, enjoyed her career, loved to dance and loved

her family.

After Bill passed away, she later married Joseph Charles Sr., also of Boynton Beach, formerly from Syracuse, N.Y. They enjoyed playing cards with friends and attending St. Mark Church.

Mary leaves behind her sister Eleanor Girouard, her nieces, nephews and their families — James Girouard and wife Maureen, Mary (Girouard) Higgins and husband Stephen, Margaret (Girouard) Marko and husband Bohdan, Tonya Girouard, Dr. Janina Longtine, Christopher



Longtine and wife Jennifer, and Gregory Longtine and wife Petra. Her husbands, her brother Francis and his wife Victoria, her brother James and his wife Marilyn, her brother-in-law James Girouard and her nephew Thomas Girouard predeceased her.

A service will be held at a later date at St. Thomas Cemetery in Palmer.

To view Mary's Online Tribute, send condolences to the family, or for more information, visit phaneuf.net.*Frieda V. Mantha, 1929 – 2020*

WINTER HAVEN, FL — Frieda V. Mantha, 91, formerly of Springfield and Palmer, passed away at home on Dec. 4, 2020.

She was born in Agawam on March 22, 1929, to the late Isaac J. and Beatrice (Paro) Nolin and had attended Agawam Schools. From 1973 to 1981, Frieda was employed at Monson Development Center as an attendant I and II. Since 1985, she was a member of the Daughter's of Isabella and past regent of Palmer Circle #408 and a Third Order Dominican Laity of the St. Joseph Chapter in West Springfield.

In 1992, she completed her Clinical Pastoral Education from Passionist Monastery in West Springfield. She was also a Eucharistic minister for six years at St. Christopher Church in Brimfield and the lector from 1992 to 1998.

Besides her parents, Frieda was predeceased by her beloved



husband of 61 years, George W. Mantha, who passed in April, 2007; her daughter Denise A. Belanger, who passed July, 2015, and her siblings E. Francis Nolin and Beatrice Allard.

To cherish her memory, she leaves her children Edward L. Mantha and his wife Judith, Renee V. Lacey and her husband James, and David E. Mantha; her grandchildren Lee Mantha and his wife Ching, Annie Bourque and her husband Paul, Roy Mantha, Michelle Decoito, Steven Guenther, Ethan, Zachary, and Brittany Mantha, Angel Carlson and her husband Ben, and Andy Belanger and his wife Tori; great grandchildren Gabriele Strapponi, Breanna and Vivian Decoito, Logan, PJ, and Lily Bourque, and Dylan Mantha; great

great grandchild Stella Strapponi.

Family and friends are invited to gather 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13, at Colonial Forastiere Funeral Home, 985 Main Street, Agawam. Funeral services for Frieda will be held at 10:30 a.m. Monday, Dec. 14,

at the Massachusetts Veteran's

Memorial Cemetery, 1390 Main

Street, Agawam. MASKS AND

SOCIAL DISTANCING ARE

REQUIRED WHILE ATTENDING

SERVICES.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Frieda's memory may be made to St. Christopher's Church, P.O. Box 387, 16 Sturbridge Road, Brimfield, MA 01010. For more information or to leave an online condolence, please visit forastiere.com

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

E-mail items to mharrison@turley.com or mail to Calendar Editor, Journal Register, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, for receipt by Monday of week for publication.

Editor's note: Due to the coronavirus pandemic, events featured in the Journal Register, including those previewed in stories, briefs and on the calendar page, may be canceled with little notice. The Journal Register encourages readers to contact event coordinators and organizers for updated event times. Have an event to promote? Email the information (in a Word doc or as email text – no PDFs, please) to mharrison@turley.com.

NOW

SANTA STORY AND MUSIC: Hitchcock Free Academy, 2 Brookfield Road in Brimfield, invites the public to hear Santa read "Twas The Night Before Christmas" and enjoy musical performances outdoors from Hitchcock's second floor balcony 3-7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, and 1-5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13. Free. For more information, including a complete list of other upcoming activities, call 413-245-9977 or go to hitchcockacademy.org.

VIRTUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR: Friends of the Monson Free Library is holding a virtual holiday bazaar for the month of December. The work of four local artists will be for sale: Maureen Solomon, potter, painter and jewelry designer; Tod Beall, stained glass artist; Peter Mayberry, metal artist; and Penny Lewis, fiber artist and quilter. Ten percent of all sales will be donated to the Friends of the Monson Free Library. For more information go to monsonlibrary.com/friends-of-the-library or email friends.monsonfree@gmail.com.

CHRISTMAS TREE SALE: Boy Scout Troop 7 is selling trees and wreaths at First Congregational church of Brimfield 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Dec. 13-14 and weekdays 4-6 p.m. (or whenever the lights are on and the fire is burning!)

SOON

MAKE YOUR OWN CENTERPIECE: AT 6:30 p.m. Dec. 16, artist Anna Ozolins will host the class at Hitchcock Free Academy, 2 Brookfield Road in Brimfield. The cost is \$15. Bring your own container. HFA will provide an assortment of seasonal greens. Bring any decorative accent(s) you wish to include in your centerpiece. For more information, including a complete list of activities, call 413-245-9977 or go to hitchcockacademy.org.

PALMER LIBRARY UPCOMING VIRTUAL EVENTS:

Palmer Public Library Virtual Reader's Circle - Wednesday, Dec. 16 6-7 p.m. Join the new monthly all-genres Virtual Reader's Circle! Have you read a great book that you want to share with others? Are you looking for new book or author recommendations? Join us for this brand new, all genres welcome, informal, friendly virtual monthly book discussion meet-up via Zoom! To register, please visit our calendar at: www.palmerlibrary.org/events.

Palmer Public Library Virtual Cookbook Club - Thursday, Dec. 17 6-7 p.m. Do you love to cook or bake and talk about food? Join our new monthly online cookbook club to learn and share recipes! Pick a recipe from your favorite cookbook, place a hold on a cookbook from our catalog for curbside pickup, or download one from our digital catalog. Make the recipe, and then chat via Zoom with others about how it turned out. Have fun while sharing and discovering recipes and cooking tips! To register, please visit our calendar at: www.palmerlibrary.org/events.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA: At noon on Dec. 19, Wreaths Across America will be at Holland Cemetery to remember and honor U.S. veterans through the laying

of Remembrance Wreaths on the graves of our country's fallen heroes and the act of saying the name of each and every veteran aloud.

If you would like to volunteer to participate in the wreath laying ceremony and/or become a sponsor, go to the "Wreaths Across America - Holland Cemetery" page on Facebook, where you will see links to help you become a sponsor, invite friends or more. You can also visit wreathsacrossamerica.org for more information.

CRAFTING AND CARD-MAKING: Tuesdays through Thursdays from noon to 8 p.m. and Fridays from noon to 6 p.m. until Dec. 23 at Hitchcock Free Academy, 2 Brookfield Road in Brimfield. For more information, including a complete list of activities, call 413-245-9977 or go to hitchcockacademy.org.

The Palmer Master Plan Steering Committee is holding a series of forums you can participate in on M-PACT channel 15, Facebook Live and Zoom. These will all start at 6:30pm. The schedule is as follows:

Dec. 17: The fifth interactive forum focuses on the element of climate adaptation and sustainability. Leveraging the town's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan, this element will look at the Town's climate projections and vulnerability analysis to comprehensively address future climate change through methods of resiliency.

Jan. 28: The focus is on natural resources, open space and recreation. Referencing the town's certified Open Space and Recreation Plan from 2015, this element will expand upon that plan's contents to address needs in consideration of projected population trends. An important aspect of this element will be weighing the trade-offs between various land uses and competing demands.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact Town Planner Linda Leduc at lleduc@townof-palmer.com or 283-2605.

INTERESTS

THE QUABOAG VALLEY QUILTERS GUILD is looking for new members. The Guild meets on the first, third and fifth Thursdays of the month at 1 p.m. in the basement of the Palmer Historical and Cultural Center, 2072 Main St., Three Rivers. The Guild is a no pressure group with varying degrees of accomplishments, from novice to Big E "Best In Show" winners. The membership fee is \$48 a year. For more information, contact Barbara Beaulieu at 267-4044 or Merry Mombourquette at 283-7577. Follow us on Facebook.

MONSON WOODWACKERS wood carving club meets every Thursday at Monson Senior Center on Main Street in Monson from 6-8 p.m. The club meets throughout the year. Membership is \$10 for the year, payable in September. Anyone interested should call Barbara Mackintosh at 413-237-8303. There are many beginner projects and experienced teachers, as well, within the club.

STAINED GLASS MAKING CLASS will be held on Thursdays at the Holland Community Center from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. or 6-9 p.m. Glass and tools are supplied. Take six classes for \$48. Class sizes are limited and are open to all ages. For more information call Tom Baltazar at 508-245-2525.

DIAMOND NATIONAL/CASCADES DIAMOND. Did you ever work there? Former employees meet on the third Tuesday of every month at Burgundy Brook Restaurant on Route 181 in Palmer from 9-10 a.m. The stories shared are often colorful but old friendships are renewed.

ONGOING

KEEP HOMESTEAD MUSEUM at 35 Ely Rd., Monson is closed for winter. There will be no meeting, tours or programs. It will tentatively re-open on Sunday, April 11, 2021. Nature trails are open daily until dusk for hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Trail maps can be found in the parking lot. The Phillips Sculpture Garden is open year-round (handouts in box on one of the sign posts). For more information call 413-267-4137, email khm@keephomesteadmuseum.org or visit www.keephomesteadmuseum.org.

LEARN ABOUT LOCAL HISTORY: Want to learn more about local history? The Elbow Plantation Historical Society is available for research and other information.

They can be reached at elbow.plantation@gmail.com. Send them your questions and comments and leave your preferred contact information and they will respond asap.

THE MONSON LIONS CLUB has a 20-foot x 20-foot tent for rent. The cost is \$75 for a two-day event. The club will put it up and take it down. For more details, contact Curt at 413-668-6653.

DAY SPRING LODGE A.F. & A.M. located 14 Bliss St., Monson is making its hall available for rent for \$75 for a variety of parties and functions. For reservations, call Doug Battie at 413-267-5855 or 413-265-9398.

RESERVE YOUR CELEBRATION TENT now for your First Communion, bridal and baby showers, graduation parties, family reunions, birthday parties or any other kind of celebration you may have outdoors. The Palmer Lions Club has a tent for you, either 20-feet x 20-feet for \$125 or 20-feet x 40-feet for \$200. This includes setup and takedown in the Palmer area. Call Karen at 413-813-8445 to make a

reservation. You may need to leave a message and your call will be returned. The Palmer Lions Club tent rental fees go towards assistance for the people of Palmer, Bondsville, Three Rivers and Thorndike.

PALMER SALVATION ARMY Service Extension Unit offers residents in Palmer and Brimfield emergency assistance on a periodic basis. The outreach coordinator will be located on the second floor of St. Paul's Unitarian Universalist Church at 1060 Central St., Palmer. You must schedule an appointment by calling 413-221-8283 so you know what documentation to bring since those seeking assistance have to meet certain criteria and show proof of need. Please leave your name, number and the date you called. Phone messages are checked weekly, not daily.

BOOKSTORE at the Unitarian Universalist Parish of Monson at the corner of Lincoln and Main streets in Monson is open the first Friday of every month from 5:30-7:30 p.m., the third Saturday of every month from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Books priced from 25 cents to \$1 each: fiction, nonfiction, thrillers, horror, mystery, science fiction, how-to, classic literature, children's books, romances, cookbooks, gardening books and more. All proceeds benefit the parish. Donations are accepted. Call Mary at 267-0033 for more information.

MARTHA'S TABLE STAFF at the Monson-Glendale United Methodist Church is supporting the Monson Open Pantry by providing a meal once a month to anyone who will bring a non-perishable food item. Staff have begun packing and delivering the meals in cooperation with the Monson Senior Center. The meal is served at the church, 162 Main St., Monson on the third Saturday of each month from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. For more information call 267-3798.

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